



HAZELNUT TORTE

Preparation time: 40 minutes + chilling

Total cooking time: 35 minutes

Serves 6-8



185 g (6 oz) hazelnuts

6 egg whites

3/4 cup (185 g/6 oz) caster sugar

1 teaspoon white wine vinegar

1/2 teaspoon vanilla essence

1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom

cocoa powder and melted chocolate, for serving

Cardamom cream

1 cup (250 ml/8 fl oz) cream

1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom

2 tablespoons caster sugar

1 Preheat the oven to moderate 180°C (350°F/ Gas 4). Brush the bases of two shallow 20 cm (8 inch) round cake tins with oil or melted butter. Line the bases with baking paper.

2 Bake the nuts on a baking tray for 8 minutes, or until roasted. Remove and rub in a tea towel to remove the skins. When cool, grind finely in a blender or food processor.

3 Beat the egg whites until stiff peaks form. Add the sugar gradually, beating until the sugar has dissolved and the mixture is thick and glossy. Using a metal spoon, gently fold in the nuts, vinegar, vanilla and cardamom.

4 Divide the mixture evenly between the cake tins. Bake for 25 minutes, or until the cakes are firm on top and set through (they will not rise at all and will be moist, but not wet, in the centre when tested with a skewer). Run a knife around the edges so that when the cakes sink slightly they will do so evenly. Leave for 5 minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack. Remove the paper.

5 To make the cardamom cream, beat the cream until soft peaks form. Add the cardamom and sugar and beat until stiff peaks form.

6 Place a cake layer on a plate and spread with a third of the cream. Place the other cake on top, spread with more cream and pipe the remainder around the edge. Chill for at least 5 hours before cutting. Dust with cocoa powder and drizzle with melted chocolate to serve.